

Excerpt from remarks Congressman Spencer Bachus delivered at a ceremony awarding a posthumous Silver Star award to Pfc. Johnathon Millican of County Line. The ceremony was held on July 28 at Locust Fork High School. Pfc. Millican died in Karbala, Iraq on January 20 when he fell on a grenade during an insurgent attack on a government compound, saving the lives of his fellow soldiers.

The actions of Johnathon Millican embody the same scriptural passage that we've heard at funerals of many of our veterans. It is: *Greater love has no man than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.*

Johnathon's life was short, but his legacy will stand.

His father shared with me a conversation he had with Johnathon just before he graduated here. Many of Johnathon's classmates were planning for college. Others had lined up a job.

Still others were talking about how they were going to spend their summers, the things they were going to do.

Johnathon had already made another decision. He was going to enlist in the Army. The call to duty to serve his country was strong in the aftermath of 9/11.

Johnathon knew there would be personal sacrifices involved.

He knew the fight would not be easy.

In fact, his father reminded him that it could be dangerous.

Johnathon accepted that.

But Johnathon believed in the mission.

From Iraq, he posted an observation on the Internet which I wish everyone in this country would observe.

The quote is, *“You don’t have to love the war but you have*

to love the warrior.”



One definition of warrior
is “someone notable strength of
spirit.”

Johnathon
resoundingly demonstrated
those qualities this past
January 20th, when
insurgents broke into the
government compound in
Karbala.

I think it is
Johnathon's valor and our
concern for all our young
men and women in the
field that brings us
together. The
Silver Star Award has
given each and every one
of us an opportunity to
thank Johnathon and his
family in a tangible way for

his service and his
courage.

I
very much appreciate each
and every one of you who
have come out this
morning to show your love,
your compassion, and your
gratitude to Johnathon and
his family.

It's a struggle to find the right words at a time like this. I think it's best to go to the soldiers in the field.

Let me read from the email sent to me this

week from Iraq by
Captain Tom Morris, who
was Johnathon's
commanding officer.



□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ “*As a*

commander of troops in combat, losing your soldiers is harder than losing family members.



Speaking at Johnathon's memorial service was the hardest thing I ever had to do.



□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ “*It
brings me great
pleasure to know that
he is being awarded
the Silver Star and
that there will be a
memorial at his high*

school in his honor.



I believe the most important thing to do is to tell his story to those who do not know it, especially those who attend his school.



□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ *“I will
always remember
him, especially his
deep southern*

accent and that he was a country boy who was the toughest there was and that nothing really bothered him.

□

I can only hope that I can be as strong, both mentally and

*physically, as he
was.*

□

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ “*He*

*will be missed, but
never forgotten.*

□

*He was my solidier,
friend, and fellow
paratrooper*

”

■



Hero is an
overused word
these days.

It's used to

describe a TV
actor or football
player.

There is a
difference between
fame and worthy
accomplishment.

The
reason we need
to tell Johnathon's

story is so people,
especially our
young men and
women and boys
and girls, do
understand the
difference
between celebrity

and heroism.

The students who
go past the
memorial here at
Locust Fork High
School will know
that a real hero

walked their halls.

To
conclude, a
passage from
Corinthians
(16:13) is
appropriate for
Johnathon and
all of the soldiers

who protect us.

It reads:

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ “

*Be on your
guard, stand
firm in the faith,
be men of
courage, be*

strong.”

These
words apply
perfectly to
Johnathon, and
why he is
deserving of
the Silver Star

being
presented to
his family
today.

